YUKON RESIDENT HUNTER'S OPINION SURVEY

1981

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Yukon
Department of Renewable Resources
Policy and Information Branch

November, 1981

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Renewable Resources
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The Department of Renewable Resources, Government of Yukon, is responsible for the management of wildlife in the Yukon Territory. Our management policies and plans are founded on two types of resource data:

1. biological information, and
2. public input.

Historically, the Department has assembled a large volume of biological information, including harvest, habitat and population dynamic data for wildlife populations in the Yukon. This data base is used to assess the productivity and resilience to disturbance of geographically distinct wildlife populations in the Yukon. In contrast, our Department has never attempted a comprehensive survey of public attitudes towards wildlife management issues.

The 1981 resident hunter opinion survey was designed to allow resident hunters in the Yukon to comment on existing and proposed management policies. The questionnaire data will be used to modify hunting regulations and species management plans where and when biological data permits tailoring programs to account for public opinion.

In February 1981, the Department mailed 4,677 opinion questionnaires (Figures 1 and 2) with postage paid return envelopes to all Yukon residents with valid 1980-81 hunting licences. In total, 1,800 (38.5%) of the questionnaires were returned. This response is extremely high when compared to other mail surveys the Department has conducted. Many respondents thanked

the Department for providing them with the opportunity to express their views, and over one hundred hunters responded with lengthy and detailed replies. The large response allows the Department to accurately assess public opinion and interpret the results of the survey with a high degree of statistical confidence.

Data from the survey questionnaire were manually transferred to coding sheets and then keypunched by the Computing Service Branch, Government of Yukon. All analyses were performed at the University of British Columbia Computing Center using a general purpose statistical package. Non-response and no opinion answers were treated as missing values. The general results and an evaluation of the responses are reported question by question on the following pages. More detailed analyses stratifying responses by residence area, hunting experience and big game seals purchased, are available from the Policy & Information Services Branch.

Question I: The Department is concerned with the increasing use of ATVs as hunting vehicles. Are you in favour of:

	% response
a - eliminating hunting from ATVs entirely	43.0%
b - restricting the use of ATVs to certain subzones	12.4%
c - restricting ATVs to transporting game after kill	27.0%
d - restricting the use of ATVs to specific times	3.1%
e - no restrictions	14.4%

The majority (85.6%) of resident hunters are in favour of A.T.V.s being restricted in some manner with 43.0% of hunters favouring eliminating their use entirely. From comments on questionnaires, it is apparent that owners of A.T.V.s don't want restrictions, while persons without access to A.T.V.s favour restrictions. A compromise such as restricting A.T.V.s in heavily hunted subzones may be acceptable to most resident hunters.

Question II: Should sheep hunting by resident hunters be restricted to full curl rams in:

	% response
a - the entire Territory	43.1%
b - certain heavily hunted areas	56.9%

At the 95% confidence level, significantly more Yukon hunters want full curl hunting in only certain heavily hunted areas than in the entire Territory.

Question III: Are you in favour of a hunting season for female sheep in some high density sheep area ?

	% response
a - yes	48.6%
b - no	51.4%

At the 95% confidence level, there are no significant differences between yes and no responses. Yukon hunters are neither in favour, nor opposed to ewe sheep seasons in high density sheep areas. An experimental ewe season by permit hunts in several subzones would probably be acceptable to most hunters.

Question IV: Are you in favour of lottery permit hunts in some subzones, to improve the quality and success of hunts ?

	% response	
	yes	no
a - moose	28.4%	71.6%
b - caribou	33.3%	66.7%
c - sheep	57.7%	42.3%
d - grizzly	54.5%	45.5%

The majority of Yukon hunters are opposed to lottery permit hunts for improving the quality and success of moose and caribou hunts, but favour them for sheep and grizzly bears.

This question confused many respondents as they were uncertain about how lottery permits might be used. Since 1978, the Department has issued permits by public lottery when population dynamics data have indicated that local wildlife populations could only support low harvest levels. The issuance of permits has allowed a controlled amount of hunting in Game Management Subzones that otherwise would have to remain closed to hunting.

Question V: Are you in favour of a change in the hunting season dates ?

	% response		
	moose	caribou	sheep
a - August 15 - October 31	9.1%	6.9%	11.7%
b - August 15 - November 15	25.9%	20.8%	14.2%
c - September 1 - October 31	10.2%	11.1%	8.4%
d - September 1 - December 1	20.0%	21.0%	7.8%
e - September 15 - October 31	1.5%	2.8%	5.1%
f - no change, August 1 - October 31	33.4%	37.4%	52.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

This question was included in the survey, because the Department is concerned about meat spoilage in warm weather. All the options presented to hunters were for later seasons. In total, 66.6% of hunters favour later season dates for moose, while 62.6% of hunters support later caribou seasons. Just over half (52.8%) of hunters want sheep seasons to remain unchanged.

The responses for moose and caribou show similar trends. Hunters selected three month seasons (options b and d), more often than shorter seasons (options a, c and e).

Question VI: Are you in favour of managing some subzones for the purpose of trophy hunts for resident hunters ?

	% response	
	yes	no
a - moose	26.9%	73.1%
b - caribou	29.0%	71.0%
c - sheep	45.7%	54.3%

Most Yukon hunters are not in favour of the Department managing subzones for trophy hunting.

The responses for moose and caribou are consistent with the answers to question IV, while the response for sheep is contradictory. Although Yukon hunters accept lottery permit hunts to improve the quality and success of sheep hunts, they are not in favour of managing subzones for trophy sheep hunts.

Question VII: Are you in favour of special seasons or areas for archery hunting ?

	% response	
	yes	no
a - moose	40.4%	59.6%
b - caribou	42.5%	57.5%
c - sheep	39.5%	60.5%
d - black/grizzly bear	34.2%	65.8%
overall	39.2%	60.8%

Even though less than half of Yukon hunters want special privileges for archery hunting, the response indicates that some innovative approach might gain general support. For example, a two week archery season in a limited number of subzones before the regular hunting season might satisfy archery hunters while having a limited effect on rifle hunters.

Question VIII: Are you in favour of special seasons for black powder hunting ?

	% response	
	yes	no
a - moose	24.8%	75.2%
b - caribou	24.8%	75.2%
c - sheep	22.1%	77.9%
d - black	21.4%	78.6%
overall	23.3%	76.7%

Yukon hunters are not in favour of special privileges for black powder hunting.

Question IX: Would you like to see a mandatory firearm - safety program for novice hunters ?

	% response
a - yes	91.6%
b - no	8.4%

An overwhelming majority of hunters want a mandatory firearm safety program for novice hunters.

Question X: Are you satisfied with the level of wildlife management in Yukon ?

	% response
a - satisfied	38.5%
b - not enough	30.0%
c - too much	5.8%
d - not familiar with what is being done	25.7%

Due to the general nature of this question, the responses were very variable.

Question XI: Should the Department present more articles about wildlife management on radio, T.V. and newspaper ?

	% response
a - yes	91.5%
b - no	8.5%

An overwhelming majority of resident hunters want the Department to release more articles about wildlife.

Question XII: Have any of your big game kills been disturbed by bears ?

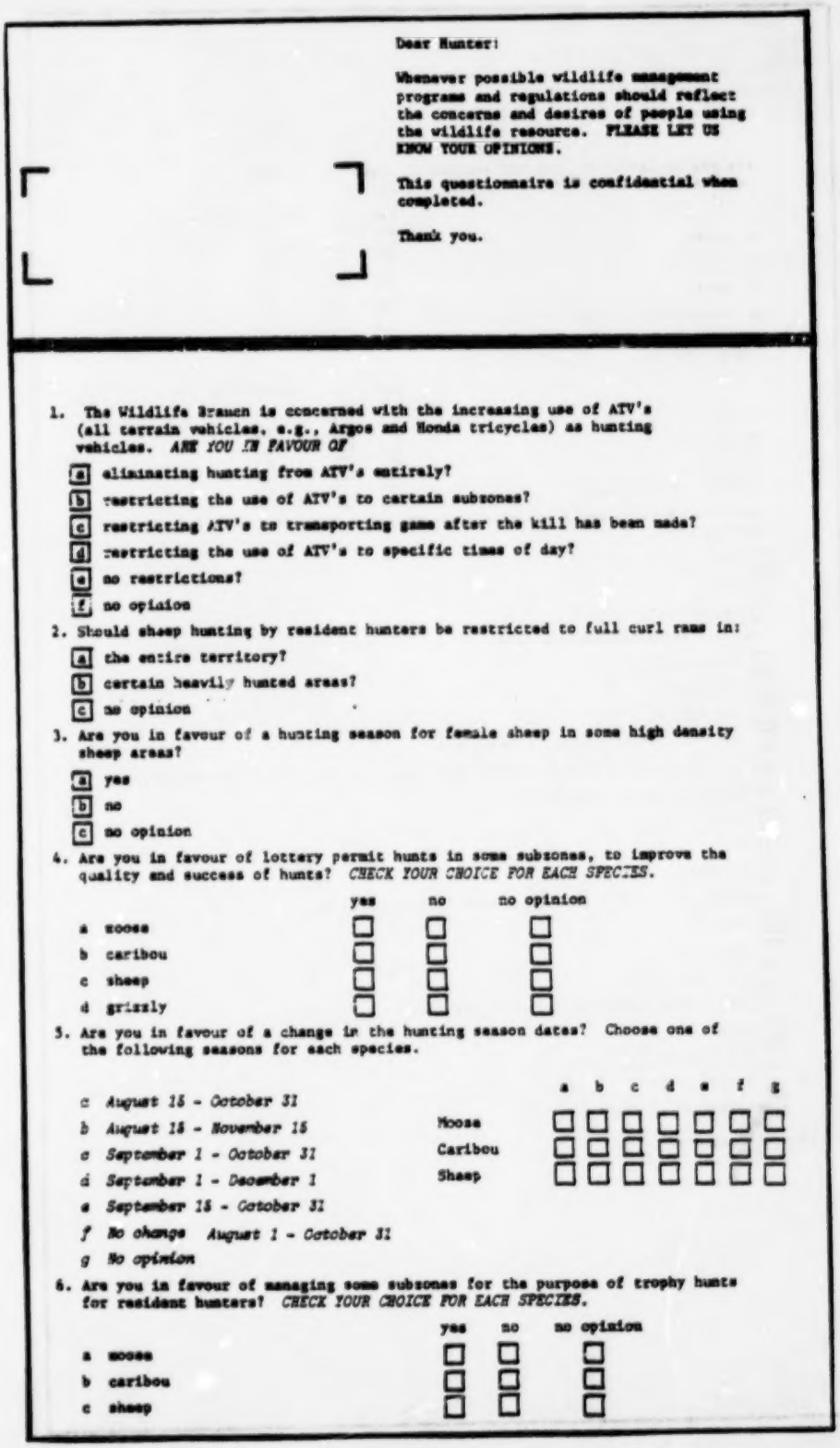
	% response
a - yes	8.9%
b - no	91.1%

In total 160 respondents indicated that they have had "bear problems" associated with big game kills. The Department is interested in the details of those encounters and has sent a follow-up questionnaire to those hunters.

Question XIII: How many years have you hunted in the Yukon ?

	% response
a - 1 year	8.9%
b - 2 to 5 years	38.3%
c - 6 to 10 years	19.0%
d - over 10 years	33.9%

This question was used to stratify responses to other questions in this survey. In general, hunting experience did not influence hunters' attitudes regarding wildlife management issues.



Dear Hunter:

Whenever possible wildlife management programs and regulations should reflect the concerns and desires of people using the wildlife resource. PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR OPINIONS.

This questionnaire is confidential when completed.

Thank you.

1. The Wildlife Branch is concerned with the increasing use of ATV's (all terrain vehicles, e.g., Argos and Honda tricycles) as hunting vehicles. *ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF*
   - [a] eliminating hunting from ATV's entirely?
   - [b] restricting the use of ATV's to certain subzones?
   - [c] restricting ATV's to transporting game after the kill has been made?
   - [d] restricting the use of ATV's to specific times of day?
   - [e] no restrictions?
   - [f] no opinion
2. Should sheep hunting by resident hunters be restricted to full curl rams in:
   - [a] the entire territory?
   - [b] certain heavily hunted areas?
   - [c] no opinion
3. Are you in favour of a hunting season for female sheep in some high density sheep areas?
   - [a] yes
   - [b] no
   - [c] no opinion
4. Are you in favour of lottery permit hunts in some subzones, to improve the quality and success of hunts? *CHECK YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH SPECIES.*

	yes	no	no opinion
a moose	☐	☐	☐
b caribou	☐	☐	☐
c sheep	☐	☐	☐
d grizzly	☐	☐	☐

5. Are you in favour of a change in the hunting season dates? Choose one of the following seasons for each species.

   c *August 15 - October 31*
   b *August 15 - November 15*
   c *September 1 - October 31*
   d *September 1 - December 1*
   e *September 15 - October 31*
   f *No change August 1 - October 31*
   g *No opinion*

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
Moose	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caribou	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sheep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. Are you in favour of managing some subzones for the purpose of trophy hunts for resident hunters? *CHECK YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH SPECIES.*

	yes	no	no opinion
a moose	☐	☐	☐
b caribou	☐	☐	☐
c sheep	☐	☐	☐

Figure 1. 1981 Yukon resident hunter opinion questionnaire front side (65% actual size).

7. Are you in favour of special seasons or areas for archery hunting? *CHECK YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH SPECIES.*

	yes	no	no opinion
a moose	☐	☐	☐
b caribou	☐	☐	☐
c sheep	☐	☐	☐
d black/grizzly bear	☐	☐	☐

8. Are you in favour of special seasons for black powder hunting? *CHECK YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH SPECIES.*

	yes	no	no opinion
a moose	☐	☐	☐
b caribou	☐	☐	☐
c sheep	☐	☐	☐
d black/grizzly bear	☐	☐	☐

9. Would you like to see a mandatory firearm safety program for NOVICE hunters?

[a] yes
[b] no
[c] no opinion

10. Are you satisfied with the level of wildlife management in the Yukon?

[a] satisfied
[b] not enough
[c] too much
[d] not familiar with what is being done

11. Should the Wildlife Branch present more articles about wildlife management on radio, T.V., and newspapers?

[a] yes
[b] no
[c] no opinion

12. Have any of your big game kills been disturbed by bears?

[a] yes
[b] no
[c] not applicable

13. How many years have you hunted in the Yukon?

[a] 1 year
[b] 2 - 5 years
[c] 6 - 10 years
[d] more than 10 years

General Comments:

Figure 2. 1981 Yukon resident hunter opinion questionnaire back side (65% actual size).